

# FLIGHT JACKET

Vol. 6, No. 26

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

July 9, 2004

## California designates 'Semper Fi Highway'

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marines past and present now have a stretch of American highway that they can call their own that honors their sacrifices and commemorates the contributions of the Marine Corps.

In a formal dedication ceremony at the Miramar Officers' Club July 2, Brig. Gen. Carl B. Jensen, commanding general MCAS Miramar, and dozens of guests and dignitaries joined California Assemblyman Jay La Suer and House Armed Services Chairman Duncan Hunter in the unveiling of the new sign announcing the "Semper Fi Highway" for the stretch of I-15 between Highway 163 and Miramar Road.

In designating the portion of the I-15, La Suer's Assembly Concurrent Resolution 121 recognizes the "positive impact" MCAS Miramar has had on California's economy and the Marine Corps' great service to America.

"This is not about politics," said La Suer. "It is about the Marines today."

After lauding one of the ceremony's honored guests, Medal of Honor recipient, retired Maj. Robert J. Modrzejewski, the new commanding general for Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area celebrated La Suer's efforts.

"We would not be here today if it were not for the tremendous efforts of Assembly-

man La Suer who has done so much to make this happen," said Jensen.

"I know there are many of you who have worked tirelessly with him to bring this great cause to fruition. This genuinely means a lot. Every time a Marine or a Marine family takes a look at (the Semper Fi Highway sign) they will be filled with pride. It is a representative of the close relationship with the San Diego community and the

surrounding area, and I look forward to building upon that here at Miramar. We are very honored by this and what you have done."

La Suer, an Army veteran who entered politics after a 31-year career in law enforcement, expressed great appreciation for the Marine Corps during the ceremony.

"Throughout the world today the Marine Corps is in every port and every land to make

the presence of the United States known, making sure that we remain free," expounded the Assemblyman from La Mesa. "The Marines are known, for their ferocity in battle and they have lost some Marines. That's part of what this is for. But I will tell you this; they have taken a terrible toll on our enemies."

La Suer was quick to single out in the audience his former high school teacher who was a Marine at the Chosin Reservoir before delivering lines from an anonymous poem to honor those who have given us our freedoms.

"It is the Marine, not the reporter, that has given us Freedom of the Press," read La Suer. "It is the Marine, not the poet, who has given us Freedom of Speech. It is the Marine, not the campus organizer, who has given us the right to demonstrate. It is the Marine, who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn our flag."

Both Hunter and La Suer hope that anyone driving through the Miramar community will salute their Marine neighbors for being America's "finest citizens."

"Every person that drives by Marine Corps Air Station Miramar (along I-15) will see that they are driving on the 'Semper Fi Highway,'" said La Suer. "They'll know that they are passing by the home of 'The Few, The Proud, The Marines!' God bless our Marines and God bless America."



(From left to right) Brig. Gen. Carl B. Jensen, California Assemblyman Jay La Suer and Congressman Duncan Hunter unveil the 'Semper Fi Highway' at a formal dedication ceremony here at the Miramar Officers' Club July 2, 2004. Photo by Cpl. Paul Leicht

## Illegal parking not an option aboard Miramar

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Sea bag packed? Check. Magazines and snacks for the plane? Check. Wallet? Check. Everything is packed and ready for that three-month trip.

Or is it?

What about that vehicle, will it just sit in one spot for the duration of that trip, unattended to for the entire time?

If it is parked illegally, just like many other privately owned vehicles, boats, motorcycles or any other type of vehicle aboard the air station that are left out too long,

there will be consequences.

The Provost Marshal's Office is on the prowl and that non-operable 1969 Mustang could be the next victim.

"Basically, if a vehicle gets abandoned, we will give the owner a citation. We will then try to find a way to contact the owner or their command," said 1st Lt. Katherine M. Hendricks, operations officer, PMO. "Our goal is to help the Marine and we will try everything we can to work with them."

A vehicle is considered abandoned if it is clearly totaled, on blocks or clearly non-drivable by sight.

"We will also give an owner a citation if they are

parked illegally. For example, if they are parked in a handicap space without a disability decal," continued the Woodbridge, Va., native.

Once a citation is received, the titleholder of the vehicle must abide by the rules and find a way to fix the problem.

If the vehicle does not budge into a legal spot, PMO has the right to impound the vehicle at the owner's expense for the appropriate towing fees.

"We try to find the owner before taking any action. If

See PARKING, page 5

## Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station



76°/63°  
Today



77°/63°  
Saturday



77°/63°  
Sunday

Flags Across America spread cheer



Page 4

Marine shares birthday experiences



Page 6

# Some extended guardsmen, reservists may get GI Bill boost

Story by Rudi Williams

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Guardsmen and reservists whose active duty time is extended past the normal 12-month call-up may be eligible for active-duty-level benefits of the Montgomery GI Bill under certain circumstances, according to a senior Department of Veterans Affairs spokesman.

Currently, members participating in the active duty GI Bill receive \$800 or \$985 per month for full-time training, depending on their length of service. But reserve-component members receive only \$282 per month for full-time training, said Dennis Douglass, VA deputy director for education service.

Reserve-component personnel are now eligible for the greater active-duty benefit when their active-duty time is extended to 24 or more months, Douglas noted.

Douglass said the Montgomery GI Bill historically has been broken into two segments: the Montgomery GI Bill for active duty and the Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve, for the reserve components.

The Selected Reserve GI Bill is for members of the Selected

Reserve of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard and the Army and Air National Guard. It provides education and training opportunities for eligible service members who have completed high school.

“The active-duty bill is a program designed for those who enlist in active military service for a period of two-plus years,” Douglass noted. “If they only serve two years, they get a lesser benefit than an individual who signs up for three or more years.”

He said the authors of the two GI Bill programs never imagined that reservists and Guardsmen would be called up to active duty for extended periods of time as they have been in Operation Iraqi Freedom. “I don’t think that was envisioned in the original legislation,” he added.

The Chapter 30 program, or the GI Bill program for active-duty service members and veterans, is currently paying \$800 per month for full-time training for those who serve two years. Those who serve three years or more receive \$985 per month.

Douglass pointed out the \$282 reserve-component members get per month is a “dramatic difference” in the level of benefits.

“Another interesting difference in the two programs is that in the Selective Reserve program, eligibility starts when the mili-

tary tells us to start it,” Douglas noted.

High school graduates are eligible for benefits after they’ve completed their initial period of active duty for training and have been assigned to a reserve or Guard component, he explained. Eligibility for active-duty people, however, doesn’t begin until after they’ve served for two years.

“They actually have to be on active duty for two years before they can avail themselves the use of the benefit,” Douglass noted. “For the most part, they don’t even start using it then; they wait until they become veterans to use it.”

Douglass noted that reserve-component call-ups have been averaging nine to 12 months. He said it would be “a disservice” to Guardsmen and reservists to take their \$100 per month for the GI Bill, as is done for active-duty personnel. “That’s because at nine or 12 months, they have no hope of being eligible for the greater benefit of the (active-duty) Montgomery GI Bill.”

However, Douglass said, some individuals have been activated for an initial period of 12 months and then extended for another 12 months. The Defense Department and the services are offering those individuals participation in the Montgomery GI Bill.

# New booklet helps reserve kids during deployment

Story by Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Separations can be tough on any child whose parent is deployed overseas — but particularly for the estimated 500,000 sons and daughters of deployed National Guard and reserve troops, according to an expert on issues involving military families.

Many Guard and reserve families lack the tight-knit support network that helps active-component families during deployments, said Mary Keller, executive director of the Military Child Education Coalition. This can lead to difficulty adjusting to what Keller calls their “suddenly military” status. As a result, she said, they can feel isolated and unsure of where to turn for help.

A new Military Child Education Coalition booklet is chock-full of ideas to help communities reach out to reserve and Guard families during their family member’s deployment. Keller said the coalition produced the booklet after repeated requests from military-family representatives,

educators and community groups.

The 12-page brochure, “How Communities Can Support the Children and Families of Those Serving in the National Guard and Reserves,” explains the dynamics of the deployment process in easy-to-understand language. It offers tips for educators and lists military and community resources for families of deployed troops.

Keller said the brochure serves as a companion guide to another popular coalition publication, “How to Prepare Our Children and Stay Involved in Their Education During Deployment.” That guide is a favorite of first lady Laura Bush, whom Keller said has read from it during visits to military bases.

Both booklets reflect the courageous spirit Keller said children of deployed troops demonstrate every day. “Our goal is to help them through this transition in their lives and this period of separation,” she said.

The publications and more information about the Military Child Education Coalition are posted on the coalition’s Web site.

## MIRAMARKS

“Why is it important to keep your family informed while on deployment?”



**SGT. MANUEL TAYLOR**  
Aviation Supply Specialist  
MAG-46

“Family readiness is important because it keeps families informed of the situation at hand and it eases the worries of loved ones.”

**LANCE CPL. MARK SHEAR**  
Electronic Technician  
H&HS

“In case a husband or a family member deploys the financial aspect is really important. It is important to make sure your family is financially secure.”



**PFC. MARISSA RIVERA**  
Airframes Mechanic  
HMH-462

“Financial care and knowing that they have the money to pay the bills, and communication is very important.”



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on the outside.

www.MarineForLife.com

## FLIGHT JACKET

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**Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte**  
**Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III**  
Forward Deployed

# New radar brings the fight back to terrorists

Story by Cpl. Shawn C. Rhodes

1st MarDiv Combat Correspondent

CAMP MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq - Nobody around 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment's command operations center likes it when Cpl. Wesley S. Fomin's handheld computer beeps. When it does, everything in the room comes to a halt. It means mortars are inbound.

It isn't a normal pocket-sized computer he holds in his hand, but the second piece of the Marine Corps' first line of defense against mortars - the Lightweight Counter Mortar Radar System.

The other piece is a 150-pound radar. The LCMR can pick up the arc of a mortar crossing its 7000 meter-span. It bounces seven signals on the object in the air in just a shade under a half a second, ensuring it is indeed a mortar and reports a 10-digit grid to Fomin's palm pilot.

The Marines in the COC hear the "whump" of the mortar impact and are already getting ready to set up counter-fire. Fomin relays the coordinates to the Marines' 81 mm Mortar Platoon, who rotate their tubes and give the attackers a taste of their own medicine.

"Operation Iraqi Freedom II is the first time this thing has been used by a Marine Corps unit," said Fomin, a 24-year-old from Oklahoma City, serving as a field artillery radio operator in the battalion. "It's so new we just learned how to use it last week."

When the Marines here replaced the



It looks like an average handheld computer, but it does so much more. Cpl. Wesley S. Fomin, a field artillery radar operator with 2 Bn. 2 Marines and an Oklahoma City, native holds a receiver for the lightweight counter mortar radar system. Photo by Cpl. Shawn C. Rhodes

Army's 1st Armored Division earlier this month, they took over the LCMR. In typical Marine fashion, they improvised to stretch the capabilities of the radar.

"When this thing gets too hot it shuts down," Fomin said. "The Army couldn't use it during the hottest part of the day because of that."

The Marines fixed the problem by hooking the radar to one of their air conditioners.

"The AC keeps it cool enough to run 24 hours a day," he added.

The actual radar system operates sort of like laser-beam security system. The

radar establishes a plane high above ground level. If anything breaks the plane, the system begins to track it.

"The great thing about the LCMR is it scans 360 degrees all the time, so we're not watching for a blip on the radar," said Lance Cpl. Dennis Aguiar, a 23-year-old forward observer from Chico, Calif. "We (forward observers) can't be in multiple spots at once, but the LCMR can. It can track mortars

launched in separate spots shot in different directions."

This feature helps the Marines protect not only their own base camp but also their units in the field.

"If something is shot up within the 7,000 meter range, we can track it even if it's not being shot toward the radar," Aguiar said. "This means our units in the field also benefit from the LCMR."

The handheld computer system is similar to most, using a common and familiar operating system. The common-based programs make it easier for Marines to learn to use the protective radar.

"Your average Marine could pick this system up and be able to operate it a few days later," Aguiar said. "Even if you don't know what the 10 digit coordinates mean, you can still relay them to someone who can."

The system not only benefits the Marines tactically against their enemies, but also psychologically.

"When the guys shooting at us know we can track their position as soon as they launch a mortar, it will make it harder for them to stay alive," said 1st Lt. James C. Moore, a 31-year-old artillery liaison officer from Clinton, S.C. "The lightweight system was designed for the Special Forces but it would be an asset to any battalion."

The psychological impact also benefits the Marines, once they overcome their skepticism.

"When a staff sergeant asked me if the system worked, I asked him if he heard our outgoing fire after we were last mortared," Fomin said. "When he said yes, I told him he answered his own question."

Fomin said Marines around the battalion are learning to trust the gear and now when his computer beeps, it's only moments until Marine mortars start flying back.

"It's good to know we have this piece of equipment here," Fomin explained. "It's good to know we don't have to wait so long to fire back and when we do, it'll be a lot more accurate. And that's the whole goal, to find out where they're shooting from and kill the bastards."

# Call-ups retraining to replace casualties in Iraq

Story by Cpl. Luis R. Agostini

MCB Camp Pendleton Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - Countless Marines are doing their part to support Operation Iraqi Freedom — even some who've already done their "four and out."

More than 175 Individual Ready Reserve Marines are at Camp Talega training or waiting to replace Marines killed or wounded in support of OIF. They've been trickling into the camp's Mobilization Support Battalion over the past few months for refresher training before shipping off to Iraq.

Unlike some of 7,500 Army IRRs who were called up Tuesday, all of these Marines voluntarily left their civilian lives.

"Call me when there's a war, because that's all I'm good for," said Cpl. William Silcox, 27, a Jacksonville, Fla., native. Silcox says he made a living outside the Corps competing in outdoor and extreme sports, such as mountain biking and rigging. He previously served with E Co., 2nd Bn., 8th Marine Regiment in Camp Lejeune, N.C.

All of the returning warriors are corporals and sergeants. They're all infantrymen. Most of those interviewed Friday had been



Marines with Mobilization Support Battalion practice patrolling techniques at Camp Talega, Camp Pendleton, Calif., June 25. More than 175 Individual Ready Reserve Marines are at Camp Talega training or waiting to replace Marines killed or wounded in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Photo by Sgt. L.A. Salinas

out of the Corps less than a year before getting the call.

They've meshed together well, despite possible differences in tactical methods and leadership philosophies, said Sgt. Ty Reber, one of the replacements.

"Everyone's really professional," said Reber, 23, a Gilbert, Ariz., native, who attended Mesa Community College before volunteering his services as a combat replacement.

"Everyone wants to be here. People sit around and talk about different ways to do things as far as tactics go."

See IRR, page 10

AD

So I was thinkin'...

## Good news, bad news and more in the world of sports



Commentary by Sgt  
Joshua Stueve

MCAS Miramar Combat  
Correspondent

As with anything in life there is usually a good side and a bad, and sports is no different. So, with that being said, regulators mount up.

**Good News:** It looks like Kobe Bryant is the hottest thing to hit free agency since Alex Rodriguez. The Phoenix Suns have already offered Kobe the maximum contract, half of Tucson, and the Grand Canyon. Maybe it's just me, but I think it's going to be hard for Kobe to pass on the Suns' offer. Denver has also shown interest in Bryant, and it shouldn't be too hard for the Nuggets brass to track him down this summer if you know what I mean. Not sure if this should go in my bad news, but LA's other team, a relatively unknown bunch called the Clippers, are also interested in Kobe's services. I've heard the Clips are getting serious about Kobe, but I still think they have about as much a chance at landing Bryant as Monica Lewinsky has at becoming a super model. It's just not going to happen.

**Bad News:** The Lakers would love to keep Kobe, but he wants to be the man. The departure of Phil Jackson certainly didn't help their chances of keeping the 25-year-old, five-time All-Star. And unfortunately as long as the UPS truck of a man named Shaquille O'Neal is wearing Laker gold, Kobe won't be.

**Good News:** College basketball will be graced with the presence of Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski (pronounced "sha-chef-ski,") for at least a few more seasons. Coach K turned down one of the most sought after coaching positions in all of sports, head coach of the Los Angeles Lakers. In spurning the Lakers' offer, the 'King of the Cameron Craziess' also turned his back on a hefty \$40 million contract that would have kept him in the city of angels until 2012. Why is saying no to the Lakers and their \$40 million good news? The world of sports desperately needs good guys, and Coach K is definitely one of them. In a time where our sports pages are filled with stories that use words like drugs, steroids, rape, lies, and sometimes even murder, it is refreshing to read about a man who represents everything good about college athletics. And one who follows his heart instead of his wallet.

See NEWS, page 10

Send your letters or opinions to the Flight Jacket editor. Include your name, rank and unit, and send to: [mcmeence@miramar.usmc.mil](mailto:mcmeence@miramar.usmc.mil).

# Children create support with patriotic art, letters



Eileen Schwartz, President of Flags Across the Nation, hands Capt. Jason S. Guttenberg, VMGR-352 assistant airframes maintenance officer, a flag made from letters from children to be sent to Marines in Iraq. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones.

Story by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The global war on terror has helped bring our nation together and united our sense of purpose and patriotism. America's children are no exception who are creatively expressing their love of country and support for veterans and deployed servicemembers fighting in defense of our cherished freedoms.

This week, deployed 'Raiders' with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 will receive and distribute uniquely patriotic symbols that express support and sincere appreciation for the sacrifices made by Marines and Sailors of Miramar.

"This week we are delivering more than 300 drawings and letters from San Diego area school children that will be distributed by the Raiders to their fellow Marines and other units," said Eileen Schwartz, president and founder of Flags Across the Nation, a nonprofit organization that promotes patriotism through the arts to unite, enrich and educate America's diverse population. "Our patriotic programs make a big impact on the San Diego County community, but the biggest difference is made in the hearts of our Marines and Sailors overseas."

Schwartz, who founded Flags following the events of 9/11, said many of the drawings are taken from exhibits and are winners from their annual art contest designed to educate children and foster support for servicemembers.

"We received great appreciation from the Marines who in return sent photos back to the children holding their letters and art work, and the kids really enjoyed that," said Schwartz. "This will be the second time we have delivered drawings and letters to the Marines with VMGR-352."

The Flags organization will join the Combined Federal Campaign for 2004 to help make a lasting impact alongside the Miramar Marine and Sailor team.

In a recent letter to Schwartz and the children, Lt. Col. Albert T. Conord, commanding officer, VMGR-352, said "We thank you for your willingness to teach our youth the meaning of patriotism through art, and that freedom we enjoy to fly our great flag does not come cheap and should not be taken for granted."

For more information on the Flags Across the Nation program or to become involved with their activities, visit [www.flagsacrossthenation.org](http://www.flagsacrossthenation.org).



AD

**PARKING**

continued from page 1

we cannot get in touch with the owner, we will tow the vehicle," explained Hendricks. "We have 24-7 patrol units whose main missions are to respond to emergencies, enforce traffic regulations and lastly to ensure there are no unsafe or illegally parked vehicles."

If a Marine or Sailor is going on deployment they can contact the Traffic Management Office at 577-1671 to take care of their vehicle.

"Any servicemember deploying for at least 90 days can park their POV in the lot at East Miramar, explained Sgt. Barbara Bowman, TMO passenger clerk. "However we will only allow one vehicle per Marine or Sailor. Also, there are no boats or trailers allowed."

Anyone aboard Miramar with a recreational vehicle or boat can contact the Outdoor Adventure Center at 577-4150 to store a personal vehicle in one of the lots.

There are fees involved, ranging from \$20 to over \$40 per month, depending on the size of the vehicle.

Station Order 1710.5A states that all unregistered vehicles or those left on the lot after the agreement has expired are subject to towing at the owner's expense.

Simple planning can help to avoid any citations, fees or towings in the future.

So before taking that trip, simply call TMO, the Outdoor Adventure Center, or PMO at 577-4068 to ensure that everything is taken care of before hoping on that plane.

# Space-A travel lands at Miramar

Story by Cpl. T.D. Smith

*MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent*

Space available flights can be a value to military personnel, if used prudently. There are some important factors and rules to keep in mind when taking advantage of this free travel that will allow for making the most of the travel experience. This option isn't limited to just active duty personnel. Family members of military personnel can also take advantage of this free form of transportation as long as their military sponsor accompanies them.

Military members must be on leave or have temporary additional duty orders to board a space available flight. Reservists must ensure they have their DD1853 form with them when they arrive to check in.

Weight allowances for luggage are important to consider when packing and planning for a trip. Two bags, not to exceed 70 pounds, and one carry on bag not to weigh more than 30 pounds are allowed for travel. Taking only what you require and will use can improve the use of the free travel benefit. Also, if you do need to take a commercial flight this may decrease the possibility of having to pay additional charges for excessive luggage.

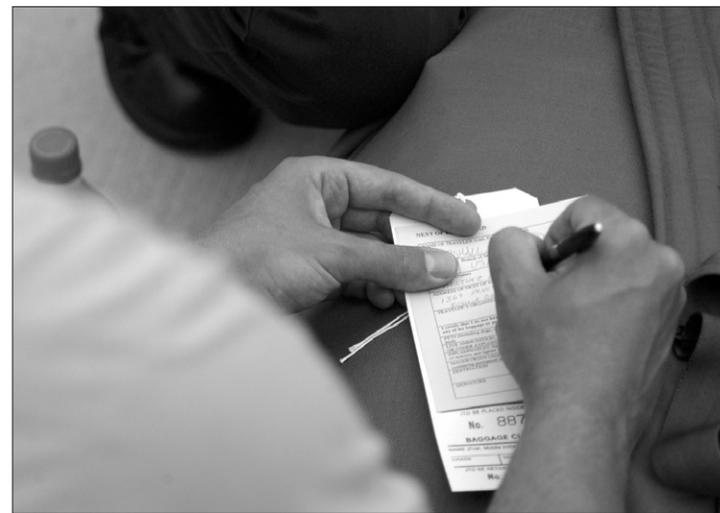
"Space A" travel can be attractive because of the absence of all costs or fees. It is also important to keep in mind the nature of the name space available flight. There may be infre-

quencies in the availability of flights due not having enough space or weight allowance for extra passengers. These commutes will not be made available for travel to passengers. Reservations are not offered, so flights will be secured only upon departure.

Operational changes may also cause a flight to be canceled. Whatever the reason for the cancellation, it is the responsibility of the traveler to be back at their appointed place of duty in time. This may mean taking more leave or buying a last minute commercial flight. Having a back up plan will ensure the successful use of the free travel opportunity.

The prospect location of the destination must also be considered when going on military flights. Family members are allowed to fly anywhere in the continental United States only.

Finding out about the scheduled flights and how to connect them to where you want to go is a problem that can be resolved



**Petty Officer Third Class Kevin Marshal, a plane captain with VFA-106, NAS Oceana prepares his bags for space available travel. The Space-A program recently took off at MCAS Miramar. Photo by Cpl. T.D. Smith**

through visiting [www.transcom.mil/mis-sions/amc.mil](http://www.transcom.mil/mis-sions/amc.mil) can be a beneficial place to start. It gives some basic information on space available travel and good contacts for points for finding what flights might be available. Individual bases can be directly contacted to see what may be available.

It would also be advisable to research commercial entities before use of space available flight. Even if the commercial option isn't used initially, the information on flights available, prices and contact numbers may be valuable if a "space A" flight is changed, canceled or closed.

AD

# Band member looks forward to birthdays with Marines

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

*MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent*

Ever since Sgt. Jon M. Koshuta joined the Marine Corps, his birthdays have taken on whole new meanings, complete with a whole new slew of family members.

Koshuta, a French horn player in the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band has celebrated three of his birthdays in ways that he would have never imagined before he joined the Marine Corps.

"I thought I would be opening presents and eating cake every year, but I was wrong," explained Koshuta. "I lived in the same house and was surrounded by the same people my whole life and anything outside of that was foreign to me, until the Marine Corps."

The Willowstreet, Pa., native enlisted in the Marine Corps when he was 19 years old, "I joined for the challenge and the sense of duty. I just wanted to give back to my country."

His first birthday in America's 911 force landed him in the sunny depths of Key West, Fla., where the band performed for a retiring admiral.

"It was my first birthday away from my family, so the experience was a little different than what I was used to," said Koshuta. "I had a great time being at an exotic

location and I felt privileged to play for the admiral there."

On his second birthday, Koshuta found himself at a less scenic location and endured the most taxing day in his Marine Corps career and life.

"I was in Jordan in Operation Enduring Freedom and it was my 21st birthday. I spent that day on a 12-hour post. I can still remember the times, 7 p.m. until 7 a.m. It was difficult because it was the longest time I have ever been away from home. I look back with pride and I am very proud of that day."

According to his fellow Marines and band mates, Koshuta has a very positive outlook on life.

"He doesn't let little things get him down, like being away for his birthday," mentioned Cpl. Christopher M. Walmer, trumpet player, 3rd MAW Band. "He's a good guy and he definitely leads by example."

Recently, Koshuta celebrated his birthday in one of the most

honorable ways a Marine could celebrate his special day.

Koshuta joined the 3rd MAW Band in providing military honors to the late President Ronald Regan during ceremonies at Pt. Magu Naval Air Station, Ventura County, Calif.

"The ceremony meant a lot to

me, he was a great President. I felt very grateful to be part of all of that on my birthday," expressed Koshuta.

Koshuta plans on spending most of his birthdays in the Marine Corps, "I want to reenlist and make a career in the Marines."

My biggest aspiration is to become a Sergeant Major and lead

other Marines."

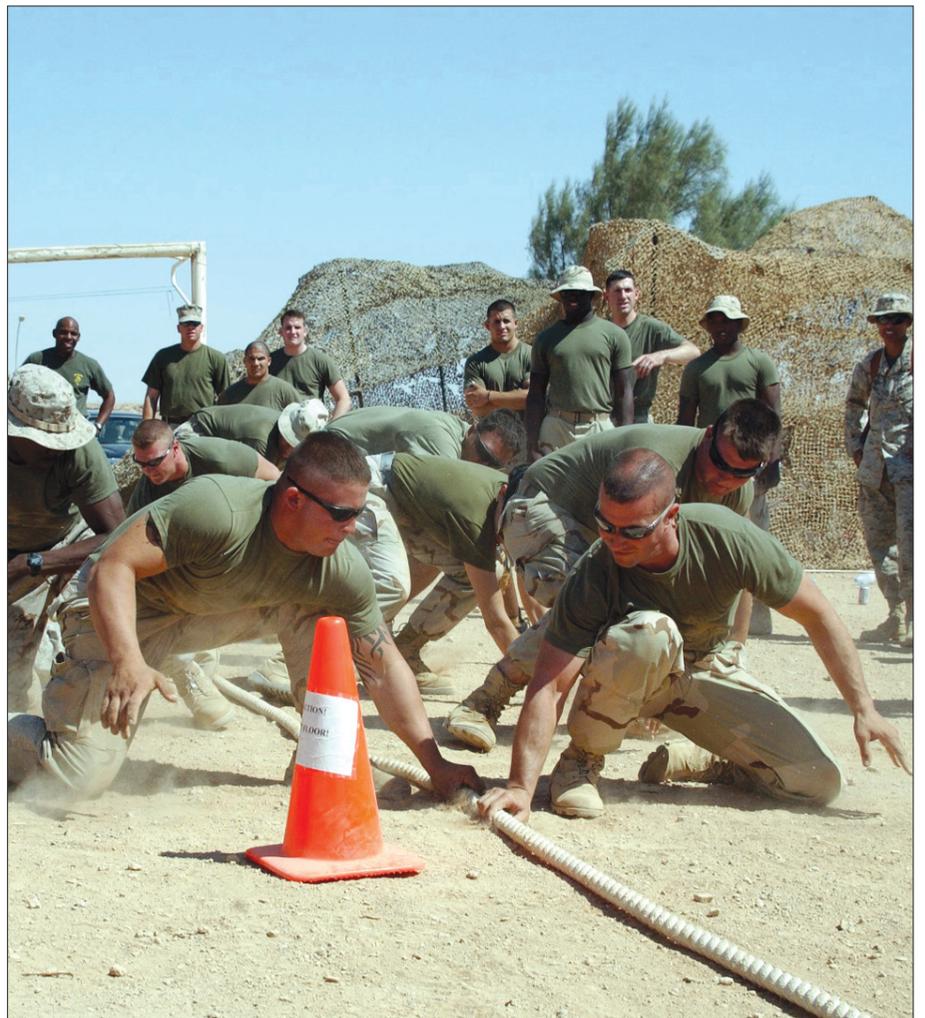
Perhaps Koshuta will find himself getting promoted on a future birthday.

"This is the line of life that I have chosen and I love what I do, so spending my birthdays this way is an honorable way to celebrate," concluded Koshuta.



Sgt. Jon M. Koshuta, French horn player, performs with the 3rd MAW Band to provide military honors to the late President Ronald Regan at Pt. Magu Naval Air Station, Ventura County, Calif. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones.

AD



## Celebrating Independence Day in Iraq

Marines at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, jump for their rope during a tug-of-war competition. The competition was part of an Independence Day celebration that also included horseshoes and volleyball competitions that were eventually won by the warriors of CSSC-123, CSSB-7, 1st FSSG. The event was sponsored by the United Services Organization and featured live music by The Red Hot Blues. More than 1,000 servicemembers were in attendance. Photo by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III.

# Geraldo views OIF from 3rd MAW perspective

Story by Staff Sgt. Houston F. White Jr.

MWHS-3 Combat Correspondent

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq- The intensity of the lights, cameras and action normally associated with international media was scaled back to a more personable level here June 24-25, when Geraldo Rivera, correspondent for Fox News Channel, spent time with the servicemembers of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

According to the 61-year-old celebrity newscaster, the intent of his visit with the MAW was to find out how the Marines were faring following a turbulent period here.

"We had been here before when the Army was here and wanted very much to see the Marines in action," explained the New York City native. "We knew how tough a time the Marines had over the past few months with events in the Northern Sunni Triangle in (Fallujah and Ar Ramadi, Iraq) and since we had covered the wild, wild west of Iraq before, we just wanted to see how the Marines were doing."

In addition to conducting interviews and reporting live during his whirlwind tour of the area, Rivera participated in a humanitarian mission at the nearby village of Sahl Hawran, Iraq, where his attitude and endurance made him popular with one particular Marine commander.

"Geraldo was very positive and I thought he did a very good job of understanding the Marine Corps and what our mission was," said Col. Juan G. Ayala, commanding officer, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd MAW. "He went with us and even though it was a hot and miserable day, he hung in there with us and he was very gracious. He's intelligent, knows a lot about the military and asked good questions," added the 47-year-old native of El Paso, Texas. "I think he experienced what we actually go through on a daily basis on our trip to the village and once the Marines saw that he



**Fox News Channel correspondent Geraldo Rivera (center right) conducts an interview with Maj. Gen. Keith J. Stalder, commanding general, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, aboard the air base at Al Asad, Iraq, June 25. Photo by Staff Sgt. Houston F. White Jr.**

was willing to get in the weeds and the dirt with them, they got a very positive impression of him."

Rivera, a former boxer, capped off an eventful first day with 3rd MAW by performing duties as master of ceremonies during an exciting boxing event held aboard

the air base at Al Asad, Iraq.

"Fight night was wild and a lot of fun," he smiled. "There was a lot of energy and as a former boxer myself, it was great to consistently see the same kind of courage and knock-down determination you would expect from the United States Marines."

According to Warrant Officer Cynthia Douglas, officer-in-charge, joint reception cell, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, 3rd MAW, the time Geraldo spent with personnel aboard the air base was genuine and enjoyable.

"He was very down-to-earth with the Marines and Sailors," remarked the 33-year-old who hails from the same borough of New York City as Rivera. "He asked them a lot of questions about their families and where they were from and (his questions) didn't seem staged like on television."

"Seeing a famous New Yorker come out here made me proud because we also share the same Puerto Rican heritage," she offered.

"I thought Geraldo's visit from home to check on us and see how we're doing was inspirational," added Gunnery Sgt. Eric Dickerson, guard chief, security platoon, MWHS-3. "He was a very friendly guy and it's motivating to know that somebody from back at home cares about providing us with (media) coverage from way out here."

Apparently, the servicemembers the renowned reporter spent time with left an indelible impression upon Rivera as well.

"These are the finest men and women serving the United States," he stated. "They do a very professional job, they have courage and they perform their jobs with an enormous amount of confidence and competence in the United States Marines. I was deeply touched by the sincerity, hard work and sacrifice of these young men and women. It really does my heart good and gives us confidence that

we can ultimately prevail in the war on terror."

AD

# San Diego Zoo lets locals go wild

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

*MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent*

People fly in from all over the globe to visit the world famous San Diego Zoo, but servicemembers stationed here have the luxury of traveling an approximate 15 minutes to get there.

At the zoo visitors can expect to see almost every type of animal imaginable, from orangutans and camels, to flamingos and giraffes, to panthers and zebras. With over 4,000 animals, there is plenty to do and see and there is sure to be an exhibit to excite everyone.

Some of the most popular animals to see however are the giant pandas. On lookers can see all three pandas, to include Hua Mei, the first giant panda born in North America this decade to live past four days. Sightseers can watch the polar bears have some fun as well underneath the water in their gigantic aquarium.

Zoo goers also might want to stay late to catch the lions and other nighttime creatures awake and ready to play, since

the zoo is open until 10 p.m. for the summer season.

There are also plenty of activities at the park to keep guests occupied for the whole day. A 40-minute guided bus tour gives guests a look at approximately 75 percent of the zoo without walking a step. There is also an express bus, which allows visitors to get off at five different locations to see the animals swiftly.

The skyfari aerial tram is available as well for an exciting activity. The tram gives guests an opportunity to catch a bird's eye view of the park.

If an admission to the zoo is purchased on base, the skyfari ride and bus tour are included in the price. In other wards, the tour can amount up to \$10 and the skyfari tram can cost \$3.

Not included in the ticket, but an amusing activity, is the jungle jump display. Fun seekers can pay a well-worth-it \$7 to jump up and down on their own trampoline, while a crane lifts them up into the air to jump farther than ever imagined.

If the walking and exciting activities get too exhausting, animal lovers can catch free



A koala rests in a tree during a warm day at the San Diego Zoo. The koalas are one of the zoo's most famous displays, and people from all over the world visit the zoo on a daily basis. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones*

entertaining shows such as the Wegeforth National Park Sea Lion Show and the Wild Ones Show to see exotic animals and birds. If lucky, visitors can catch a glimpse of a statue that comes to life in the Living Garden.

Visitors coming from the air

station can save money inside the zoo by bringing food and snacks from home.

Zoo goers can also save some pain in their feet by wearing comfortable walking shoes.

The zoo is sure to provide the entertainment to last the

whole day.

Tickets can be purchased at the entertainment office for \$25.50 for an adult and \$16.25 for a child. The fee includes one bus tour and skyfari aerial tram.

For more information call the zoo at (619) 234-3153.

## Miramar students receive college scholarships

Story by Sgt. Kristen L. Tull

*MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent*

Being a military child means moving around every three years and dealing with your mother or father being deployed for months at a time. But, it also has its benefits, as two Miramar family members learned this week when they each received a \$1,500 scholarship to a four-year school of their choice.

"Scholarships for Military Children", is open to qualified sons and daughters of U.S. military ID card holders to include active duty, retirees, and guard/reserves that were graduating high school seniors or enrolled in a four-year program. They need a 3.0 grade point average and are required to write a short essay on "how was being a military dependent affected your educational goals."

Stacy L. Perillo, a senior at Mira Mesa High School, was chosen because of her excellent academic standards and her moving essay where she highlighted her father as her source of inspiration.

"My father has made the greatest impact on my life, even when he was away on deployment, getting the letters saying how much he missed me meant so much to me," wrote Perillo. She added that her father taught her well, and that he is a very honorable man.

"The holidays were the hardest, but I'm thankful for what he is doing for our country and thankful to be able to receive this scholarship because of what he is doing," said Perillo.

Ryan Kopke, a senior at Rancho Bernardo High school, also won a scholarship. Kopke's father is in the Army and also stated that being a part of a military family had its downfalls, but he has also had a lot of fun.

"I lived in Colorado where I got to experience a beautiful side of the country, I've lived the big city life and then I came to California where I learned how to surf and ski," said Kopke. "I know if I weren't part of a military family, I wouldn't have been able to experience all that I have."

Kopke plans on attending Biola University in La Mirada, Calif., where he wants to study biochemistry and eventually become a medical doctor.

The SMC program started in 2001 and since then nearly 2,000 scholarships have been awarded at a monetary amount of approximately \$3 million. Despite a minimum 3.0 GPA, the average of the 7,000 applicants is 3.8-3.9 and almost all are members of the National Honor Society, an organization that recognizes students who demonstrate academic excellence, leadership and character.

# Retired General shares his views with Miramar Marines

*Anthony Zinni, co-author of Tom Clancy's 'Battle Ready' discusses military with Miramar officers, SNCOs*

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

"It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows," said Epictetus, a first century A.D. theorist.

Like the stoic philosopher, Retired Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni has the same views in regards to the military.

Zinni, co-author with Tom Clancy of "Battle Ready," spoke to officers and staff non-commissioned officers June 21 about his views on Iraq, the military and change.

"We can definitely expect change in the military in the next four years, no matter which candidate gets elected," stated Zinni, U.S. Peace Envoy in the Middle East and Special Envoy to the Indonesian conflict peace effort.

Zinni spoke about three areas of reform that he would like to see in today's military, which would affect servicemembers at Miramar.

First, he would like to adjust the manpower and personnel within the military, "Our servicemember's careers are too short. The military invests too much money into each person to have him or her retire in 20 years. No other business would operate this way. Our military has the same retirement system as the Roman army."

Zinni proposes that servicemembers serve a term of 30, 40 or even 50 years in the military. He also suggests that servicemembers stay in each grade longer in order to become more proficient.

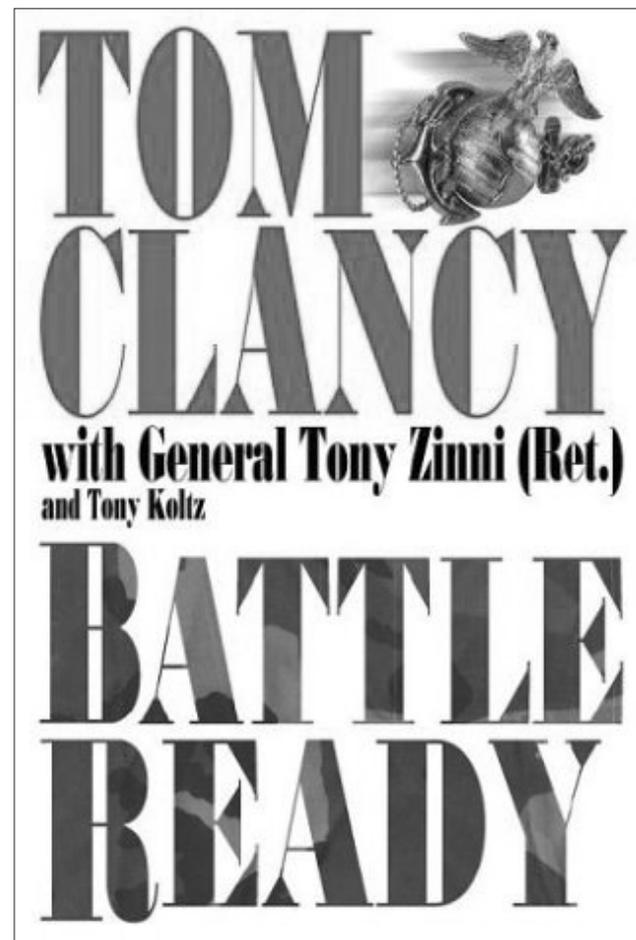
Secondly, Zinni has dreams of a more educational military force with a technological edge, "We're five generations behind and we need to start moving at a faster pace. Any other government agency would fail

if they operate like we do now. This archaic system needs to change."

"For instance, we still have land mines today and they can create a lot of technological problems, as well as taking a lot of time to put in. We could create another new technology that could replace the land mines and old technology," added the former four-star General.

Lastly, Zinni proposed a plan for reform, "If we were to take away three to four levels of staff we would function a lot better. For example, there might be one squadron who would just concentrate on war fighting, so they wouldn't have to deal with administrative issues. When regiments and air groups were created they were strictly for fighting. This layered system cripples us."

Zinni has many ideas for reform in the military, which his 40 years of experience in the military have helped shape, "We need to fix the military before it breaks people. My generation would not be able to recognize the military now."



LEFT: Former General, Anthony Zinni discusses his views and opinions on changes in the military with Officers and SNCOs. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones  
ABOVE: 'Battle Ready' by Tom Clancy and Anthony Zinni is now available at most book stores. Zinni recently visited the station for a SNCO and officer PME. Photo courtesy of Putnam Publishing Group

AD

# MALS-16 ordnance outfits Marine aircraft in Iraq

Story by Lance Cpl. Matthew Rainey

MAG-13 Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq - When it comes to airborne weapons and ammunition, Marine Corps squadrons flying missions over Western Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom depend on one squadron.

The "Forerunners" of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, are responsible for the repairs, maintenance and testing of the group's aircraft weaponry, as well as the building, testing, and supply of the group's ammunition.

Based in multiple locations across the 3rd MAW area of operations, MALS-16 provides ammunition to the Marine squadrons flying in the Al Anbar province of Iraq, said Cpl. Tom Y. Yabe, ammunition stock recording clerk, MALS-16.

"Right now we are playing a double role," said the 21-year-old from Renton, Wash. "Not only do we issue ammunition to all the squadrons here, but we also supply all the (forward operating bases). We are accountable for all the (Marine) aviation ordnance in Iraq."

Gunnery Sgt. Kevin O. Jones, assistant ordnance noncommissioned officer-in-charge, MALS-16, said the squadron supplies different kinds of munitions for a wide range of purposes.

"MALS-16 is here to support all munitions requirements for the aviation combat elements, from cartridge-actuated devices which are used in landing gear, fire extinguishers and flight suits, to laser-guided missiles and bombs used as bunker-busters and tank destroyers," said the 37-year-old from Casa Grande, Ariz.

"Everybody thinks that these bombs are ready-made, but that's not how it is," explained Jones. "We tailor-make them out here from 500-pounders to 2,000-pounders."

Assistant maintenance NCOIC for MALS-16, Sgt. Clyfford Ashby, said the "Forerunners" are also qualified to take care of all Marine aircraft weapon systems in Iraq.

"Anything that launches (munitions), fires it or deals with it, we fix it," elaborated the 26-year-old Las Vegas native.

All the maintenance issues have been smooth and routine so far, said Cpl. Renoid P. Berthelot Jr., collateral duty inspector, MALS-16.

"We do a lot of routine maintenance; one-year checks, 180-day checks. After planes fly so much, parts start to break on them (such as) electronics (and) mechanics," expounded the 22-year-old New Orleans native. "Things have been smooth. We've just been doing tests and routine maintenance."

The work pace was the most hectic when the squadron first arrived in Iraq, but has since settled down, said Jones.

"Within 24-hours of getting here, we built all the bombs and had everything ready to go," said Jones. "Now they give us a call and that throws us into gear. We put together everything they want. We build it and deliver it to the squadron."

Despite the early rush to get set up, day-to-day operations in Iraq remain more demanding than in the United States, said Berthelot.

"Back in the rear, we had more notice for munitions requests. Out here when they say they need it, we have to get it out the door," he said.

"We have a bigger workload and a faster tempo," expounded Ashby.

Different Marines from squadrons all over the Marine Corps are handling the heavier workload, said Gunnery Sgt. Kenneth O. Round, NCOIC, ordnance maintenance department, MALS-16.

"We have Marines from seven different squadrons right now," said the 35-year-old from Sterling, Va. "The reservists are doing their part. Everyone is carrying his or her load. You can't tell the difference between active and reserve (Marines)."

Even though the squadron has Marines coming together from multiple squadrons and atmospheres, the job still gets done every day.

"It's amazing how well these guys have gelled together. It looks like the units that sent their Marines out here sent some of their best Marines," said Round. "They accomplish all the tasks whether they are given a short fuse or advanced warning. I've been surprised at how well they have performed."

According to Yabe, one of the other tasks of the MALS-16 Marines is to maintain complete accountability of all ordnance.

"If something comes up, your commander will want to know what he has available and where it is," said Yabe.

"When we are out here, we have to keep track of all our ammunition. If something is missing, it could be a danger to anyone around if we don't have that accountabil-



Gunnery Sgt. Kevin O. Jones, assistant ordnance noncommissioned officer-in-charge, and Staff Sgt. Luke T. Somerville, station weapons NCOIC, MALS-16, MAS-16, 3rd MAW, remove the cover from an AGM-65E Maverick Missile, June 18 at Al Asad, Iraq. MALS-16 supplies all MAG-16 aircraft with ordnance here in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Photo by Lance Cpl. Matthew Rainey

ity," he added.

Accountability is of unquestionable importance, no matter what time it is, emphasized Jones.

"Our requirements are (to have) 100 percent accuracy in inventory. Wartime or peacetime, we cannot lose one item," he explained.

As time progressed, weapons technology and the Marines who build those weapons have adjusted to become more tactical and efficient, said Jones.

"This day and age is a lot different than when I came in 20 years ago. We used to drop dumb bombs by the hundreds. Now everything is precision guided. Instead of hundreds, we might put together 12, but have similar results," he said.

One thing that has not changed is the emphasis on safety in a potentially dangerous job field, said Jones.

"Safety is our number one concern. I have to trust these guys. They have to trust themselves and be able to tell me when something is wrong," Jones explained.

Whatever happens, the Marines of MALS-16 are prepared to stay for the long haul, said Berthelot.

"As long as it takes to get the job done is how long we'll stay," he said.

## IRR

continued from page 3

"All of us are pretty excited to train and get over there to Iraq," said Sgt. Jason D. Griggs, a Wilmington, Del., resident, who returned to the Corps after serving as an infantryman with E Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment until June 27, 2003.

Almost exactly a year later, Griggs — along with his E Co., 2/3 alumnus, Wilmington roommate and fellow bike courier Cpl. Dustin McKenzie — returns to familiar territory, joining his fellow infantrymen or "03s" in Iraq

Based on media coverage of I Marine Expeditionary Force's security and stabilization operations in Iraq, many reservists figured it was only a matter of time before they would get the call.

"I figured I'd get recalled. I was just waiting for it to happen," Grigg said. "You watch the news, and you wish you could do your part."

The Marines returning to active duty are making Camp Talega their new home for the next few months. While there, they'll brush up on their combat skills during combat replacement training.

By the end of this week, all 175 combat warriors will have received refresher train-

ing in basic weapons and tactics — everything from pistols to machine guns, and from land navigation to urban patrolling, said Gunnery Sgt. John V. LaMantia, staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge of combat replacement training here

Some of the Individual Ready Reservists have adopted the "contract-warrior" mentality, ready to complete any mission at a moment's notice.

"I'll keep going until my body doesn't go anymore," Silcox said.

He explained why he answered the call.

"I came back to go to combat because I'm seeing my fellow Marines dying," Silcox said.

The Marines who have been recalled are no strangers to battle.

"These guys are already skilled infantrymen," LaMantia said. "We just dust them off, refresh and reiterate."

Aside from a few complaints about lack of transportation and constant waiting, the morale of the recalled NCOs seems high.

"I'm not surprised that Marine NCOs are like this, but it's nice to see," LaMantia said.

"These guys are real patriots, and they are seriously motivated. They want to be here. They didn't come here to stand guard or to augment to I Marine Expeditionary

Force. They need to be allowed to do what they can do."

IRRs are service members who've already served their four-year active-duty requirement but haven't fulfilled their eight-year obligation to the military. Most are on IRR status for four years after active duty and can be called up to meet the nation's needs.

No more IRRs currently are scheduled to come through Camp Pendleton, LaMantia said.

## NEWS

continued from page 4

**Bad News:** Sorry, no bad news here.

**Good News:** Boxing's heavyweight division will finally be somewhat interesting again. Mike Tyson, will be stepping into the ring a proposed seven times over the next three years to eliminate the \$38 million he is in debt to various creditors including the Internal Revenue Service to which he owes \$18 million. Tyson's first fight will be against a journeyman from Britain named Danny Williams, July 30. If Tyson wins he could fight again as early as the fall.

**Bad News:** Tyson has had to put his two homes in Las Vegas up for sale, and he is

now broke and living in a small home in Phoenix while he trains for his next fight.

**Even More Bad News:** Tyson has to pay his ex-wife a \$9 million settlement plus \$750,000 from each fight. Ouch.

**Good News:** Lance Armstrong is gunning for his sixth straight victory at the world's toughest sporting event, the Tour De France. The past few years have been a breeze for Armstrong, winning each Tour with relative ease, though I'll admit he did struggle at times last year. It seems as though Sir Lancelot's story just never gets old: Beat cancer, win the Tour De France. On top of that he's dating Sheryl Crow. Life just doesn't get much better.

**Bad News:** This year's race will be the toughest for Lance. He has lost a few key teammates, and for those of you who are not familiar with cycling, it is a very team oriented sport. Armstrong has also not fared very well in the races he entered to prepare himself for the Tour, and some of his critics say it's because of his new girlfriend. Without a doubt this year's Tour De France will be Lance's toughest test so far, he's getting older, but let's hope come July 25th, he's still wearing that yellow jersey and riding down the Champs-Elysees waving the Stars and Stripes.

**Miramar Movies**

The Station Auditorium is located in building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies free of charge. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information contact 577-4143 or log on to [www.mccsmiramar.com/THEATER/theater.html](http://www.mccsmiramar.com/THEATER/theater.html).

**Friday:**

4:30 p.m. Shrek 2 (PG)  
6:30 p.m. Troy (R)  
9:30 p.m. Soul Plane (R)

**Saturday:**

1 p.m. New York Minute (PG)  
6:30 p.m. Shrek 2 (PG)  
8:30 p.m. Breakin' all the Rules (PG-13)

**Sunday:**

1 p.m. Mean Girls (PG-13)  
6:30 p.m. Envy (PG-13)

**Wednesday:**

6:30 p.m. Harry Potter/Prison of Azkaban (PG)

**Thursday:**

2 p.m. Harry Potter/Prison of Azkaban (PG)  
6:30 p.m. Troy (R)

Presentations and time subject to change.

**Religious Services**

The Chaplain's Office is located in building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities contact the Chaplain's Office at 577-1333.

**Sunday:**

9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service  
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

**Wednesday:**

7 p.m. Baptist service

**Monday-Friday:**

11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Daily Mass

**Jewish:**

7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD  
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

**DD Association**

The Designated Drivers Association is looking for volunteers.

Volunteers can meet new people, earn extra money in tips and make a difference.

Volunteers must be at least 18 and have a valid drivers license and insurance. For more information, visit [www.ddasd.org](http://www.ddasd.org) or call (866) 373-7233.

**Change of Command**

**MALS-11**

Lt. Col. S.A. Reynolds will relinquish Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 to Lt. Col. Daniel Gillan in a change of command ceremony July 9 at 2 p.m at Hangar 1.

Send your change of command notices to the Flight Jacket editor at [mcmeence@miramar.usmc.mil](mailto:mcmeence@miramar.usmc.mil). Include all who, what, where and when information.

**Mrs. Semper Fi**

Marine Corps and Navy spouses, active duty females and veterans are wanted for the upcoming 2004 Ms. Semper Fi Pageant to be held in September.

No experience is required and there is no swimsuit or talent competitions.

Pageant is open to females 18 years of age or older, and space is limited to the first 30 applicants.

For more informations visit their Web site at [www.clix.to/pageant](http://www.clix.to/pageant) or call (909) 695-7222.

**Modified gate hours**

The East Gate is now closed from 12-5 a.m. daily.

Flightline gates 5 and 22 will be fully automated with all access being granted through card swipes until notified otherwise.

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are now taking place at the Marine Corps Community Services Counseling Center in building 2274.

The classes will we be held Monday through Wednesday from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

All active duty personnel, retirees, family members and DoD employees can participate.

For more information call 577-7285.

**Postal overload**

Remember to check your military mail box daily and to check out with the post office when going on leave or TAD for 15 or more days at a time.

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**73 VW BUG EXCELLENT** — condition, new tires, custom rims, have extra parts \$2950 obo 858-212-5352 or 858-278-0044

**ESTATE SALE**

**HUGE ESTATE SALE** — kitchen appliances, washer/dryer, dining table/chairs, bedroom set, sewing machine, piano, sofa bed and more! Everything must go. Cash & Carry, July 10th at 8am 5634 Ashland Ave (760) 685-0733

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For more information see our website at: [www.psilabs.com](http://www.psilabs.com)

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Consumer lending company specializing in servicing Military borrowers seeks energetic individuals to work in our Miramar and new San Diego office. Prior office experience, computer and customer skills a must. Good credit required.

Fax resume to: 858-578-3763  
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Email to: [hr5@omniloans.com](mailto:hr5@omniloans.com)

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